



Biden to keep Powell as Fed chair, Brainard gets vice chair

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden said Monday he is nominating Jerome Powell for a second four-year term as Federal Reserve chair, endorsing his stewardship of the economy through a brutal pandemic recession in which the Fed's ultra-low rate policies helped bolster confidence and revitalize the job market.

Biden also said he would nominate as vice chair Lael Brainard, the lone Democrat on the Fed's Board of Governors and the preferred alternative to Powell among many progressives. His decision strikes a note of continuity and bipartisanship at a time when surging inflation is burden-

ing households and raising risks to the economy's recovery. In backing Powell, a Republican who was elevated to his post by President Donald Trump, Biden brushed aside complaints from progressives that the Fed has weakened bank regulation and has been slow to take account of climate change in its supervision of banks.

"When our country was hemorrhaging jobs last year, and there was panic in our financial markets, Jay's steady and decisive leadership helped to stabilize markets and put our economy on track to a robust recovery," Biden said, using Powell's nickname.

Continued on next page



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell speaks after President Joe Biden announced Powell's nomination for a second four-year term as Federal Reserve chair, during an event in the South Court Auditorium on the White House complex in Washington, Monday, Nov. 22, 2021.

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In a second term that begins in February, Powell would face a difficult and high-risk balancing act: Inflation has reached a three-decade high, causing hardships for millions of families, clouding the recovery and undercutting the Fed's mandate to keep prices stable. But with the economy still 4 million-plus jobs shy of its pre-pandemic level, the Fed has yet to meet its other mandate of maximizing employment.

Next year, the Fed is widely expected to begin raising its benchmark interest rate, with financial markets pricing in at least two increases. If it moves too slowly to raise rates, inflation may accelerate further and force the central bank to take more draconian steps later to rein it in, potentially causing a recession. Yet if the Fed hikes rates too quickly, it could choke off hiring and the recovery.

If confirmed, Powell would remain one of the world's most powerful economic officials. By either raising or lowering its short-term interest rate, the Fed seeks to either cool or stimulate growth and hiring, and to keep prices stable. Its efforts to direct the U.S. economy, the largest in the world, typically have global consequences.

The Fed's benchmark rate, which has been pegged near zero since the pandemic hammered the economy in March 2020, influences a wide range of consumer and business borrowing costs, including for mortgages and credit cards. The Fed also oversees the nation's largest banks.

For months Powell was the favorite to be reappointed, but a vigorous campaign by environmental and public interest groups in support of Brainard clouded the picture in recent weeks.



Lael Brainard, right, President Joe Biden's nominee to be Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve, speaks during an event in the South Court Auditorium on the White House complex in Washington, Monday, Nov. 22, 2021.

Associated Press

Critics, including Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Massachusetts, argued Powell had loosened bank regulations that were put in place after the 2008-2009 financial crisis.

And two other senators expressed opposition to Powell last week because they said he was insufficiently committed to using the Fed's regulatory tools to combat global warming.

Brainard, meanwhile, cast 20 dissenting votes against financial rule changes in the past four years. In March 2020, she opposed a regulatory change that she said would reduce the amount of reserves large banks were required to hold to guard against losses. She has also spoken more forcefully than Powell on ways the Fed can confront global warming.

Biden sought to assuage those concerns. He said Powell had committed to making climate change "a top priority" and had agreed to make sure "that our financial regulations are staying ahead of emerging risks."

"Jay, along with the other members of the Fed Board that I will nominate must ensure that we never again expose our economy and

American families to those kinds of risks," he said at the White House, referring to the 2008 financial crisis.

Biden still has the opportunity to fill three more positions on the Fed's Board of Governors, including the vice chair for supervision, a top bank regulatory post. Those positions will be filled in early December, Biden said.

Biden acknowledged that some Democrats encouraged him to pick a new Fed chair, for a "fresh start." But he said he wanted to go in a different direction.

"We need stability and independence at the Federal Reserve," he said. "I believe Fed leadership with broad and bipartisan is important, especially now, in such a politically divided nation."

Biden praised Powell for his efforts to achieve maximum employment, but did not press him on inflation, which has emerged as the biggest economic threat to his administration. Biden said the U.S. economy is in the midst of a "historic recovery" that gives the Fed an opportunity to "attack inflation from a position of strength, not weakness."

Powell said "we know that high inflation takes a toll on

families, especially those less able to meet the higher costs of essentials, like food, housing and transportation." He pledged to use the Fed's tools — principally raising interest rates — "to prevent higher inflation from becoming entrenched."

Powell's renomination is widely expected to be approved by the Senate Banking Committee and then the full Senate.

Some liberal Democrats such as Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, chair of the Banking Committee, have endorsed Powell, as have moderate Democrats, including Sen. Jon Tester of Montana. He was also endorsed by Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pennsylvania, the senior Republican on the panel, and will likely receive widespread support from Republicans.

Wall Street cheered the renomination, with stock prices rallying and measures of fear in the market easing immediately after the announcement. The S&P 500 is on pace to close at another record.

The 68-year-old lawyer was nominated for the Fed's Board of Governors in 2011 by President Barack Obama after a lucrative career in private equity and having served in a number of federal government roles.

Unlike his three immediate predecessors, Powell lacks a Ph.D. in economics. Yet he has earned generally high marks for managing perhaps the most important financial position in the world, especially in his response to the coronavirus-induced recession.

Still, the spike in inflation has forced the Powell Fed to dial back its economic stimulus sooner than envisioned. At its latest meeting in early November, the central bank said it would start reducing this month its

\$120 billion monthly bond purchases and likely end them by mid-2022. Those purchases have been intended to keep longer-term borrowing costs low to spur borrowing and spending.

For months, Powell characterized inflation as "transitory," but more recently, he conceded that higher prices have persisted longer than expected. At a news conference this month, Powell acknowledged that high inflation could last into late summer 2022.

Brainard's elevation to the Fed's No. 2 position follows the key role she played in the Fed's emergency response to the pandemic recession. She is part of a "troika" of top policymakers that includes Powell and Richard Clarida, whom she will replace as vice chair in February. Brainard was an architect of the Fed's new policy framework, adopted in August 2020, under which it said it would no longer raise rates simply because the unemployment rate had fallen to a low level that could spur inflation. Instead, the Fed said it would await actual evidence that prices are rising.

Brainard also was key in the Fed's redefinition of its maximum employment goal as "broad and inclusive," taking into account the unemployment rate for Blacks and other groups and not just for Americans as a whole in policy decisions.

She has also spoken about ways the Fed could more directly take account of climate change in bank supervision. Many environmental groups say loans to oil and gas companies, as well as to commercial real estate developers, could default and cause large losses at banks, should environmental damage worsen or renewable energy provide a greater share of power generation. □

Bidens open holidays with Christmas tree and 'friendsgiving'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jill Biden opened the holiday season at the White House on Monday by breaking off a small branch from the official Blue Room tree and giving it - along with a big smooch — to her toddler grandson.

"Look how beautiful this is," the first lady said of the 18 1/2-foot (5.6 meter) Fraser fir that was delivered to her Pennsylvania Avenue doorstep by Clydesdale horses named Ben and Winston, who pulled a wagon carrying the tree.

"It is beautiful. It's magnificent, really," she said.

Son Hunter Biden, his wife, Melissa, and their toddler, Beau, were among a sizeable group of White House aides, guests and others who braved crisp winds to watch the brief ceremony marking the start of President Joe Biden's first Christmas in the White House.

The tree was presented by the father-and-son team of Rusty and Beau Estes of Peak Farms in Jefferson, North Carolina — a three-



First lady Jill Biden waves to people watching as she looks over the official White House Christmas Tree, grown in North Carolina, as it arrives at the White House in Washington, Monday, Nov. 22, 2021.

Associated Press

time winner of the National Christmas Tree Association's annual contest. The winner gets to present its official tree to the White House.

White House grounds superintendent Dale Haney went to the farm in October to pick out a tree. Peak

Farms also supplied the official White House tree in 2008 and 2012.

The Fraser fir will be decorated in the coming days and displayed in the Blue Room, a tradition that dates back to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, after

a chandelier is removed so it can be tethered to the ceiling for safety during the season.

The White House Christmas decorations will be revealed on the Monday after Thanksgiving, the first lady said.

She also was joined by a D.C. Army National Guard family to honor the National Guard's role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, her office said. She has been using her new role to help highlight and rally support for military families from across the country through an initiative named Joining Forces. The Bidens' late son, Beau — for whom the toddler grandson is named — served in the Delaware Army National Guard.

Later Monday, the first lady was joining President Biden, the commander in chief, on a trip to the Army's Fort Bragg in North Carolina to celebrate "friendsgiving" with service members and military families. The term combines the words "friend" and "Thanksgiving" and refers to a large meal among friends that's eaten during the Thanksgiving season.

On Tuesday, they plan to participate in a to-be-announced local service project before resuming their family tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving on the Massachusetts island of Nantucket. □

Harris announces \$1.5B investment in health care workforce

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris announced Monday that the Biden administration is investing \$1.5 billion from the coronavirus aid package to address the health care worker shortage in underserved communities.

The funding will go to the National Health Service Corps, Nurse Corps and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery programs, all federal programs that offer scholarship and loan repayments for health care students and workers if they pledge to work in underserved and high-risk communities.

"Our nation must invest in a health care workforce that looks like America, and provide access to equitable health care for all Americans," Harris said.

The money, which includes funds from the American Rescue Plan and other

sources, will support more than 22,700 providers, marking the largest number of providers enrolled in these programs in history, according to the White House. It comes in response to recommendations laid out earlier this month by the White House's COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force, which issued a report outlining how the administration could address systemic inequality in the health care system.

The COVID-19 pandemic has both highlighted and exacerbated health care disparities for minority and underserved communities. According to an analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation, over the course of the pandemic, minority Americans have seen higher numbers of cases and higher rates of death than their white counterparts.

"COVID-19 did not invent health disparities. Just

ask any healthcare professional and she will tell you: Health disparities existed long before this virus reached our shores. Health disparities stem from broader systemic inequities," she said.

It's just the latest investment from the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, passed in March of this year, aimed at addressing health disparities among minority and underserved communities. Earlier this month, the White House announced an additional \$785 million in funding for federal programs aimed at improving diversity in the public health workforce and supporting people with disabilities.

During the Monday event, Harris pushed for passage of President Joe Biden's nearly \$2 trillion social safety net and climate change package, which would provide funding to temporarily close the Medicaid



Vice President Kamala Harris speaks about the recently signed infrastructure law will benefit Ohioans after touring the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union Local 189 Friday, Nov. 19, 2021, in Columbus, Ohio.

Associated Press

coverage gap and expand access to health insurance marketplace subsidies through 2025.

Harris said the package would also make a historic investment in maternal health "to address the tragedy of black maternal mortality in America."

Black women in the U.S. are about three times as likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause as others, partly because of racial bias they may experience in getting care and doctors not recognizing risk factors such as high blood pressure. □

Probe finds 'overwhelming evidence' of misconduct by Cuomo

By **MARINA VILLENEUVE**

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A legislative investigation released Monday found "overwhelming evidence" that former Gov. Andrew Cuomo sexually harassed women and that he ordered state workers to help produce his book on pandemic leadership during work hours.

The report also found that Cuomo's staff "substantially revised" a state health department report on COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes to exclude statistics that might have dimmed his reputation as a pandemic leader.

The findings, authored by a law firm hired by the Assembly's Judiciary Committee, were widely expected, and the sections on sexual harassment largely echo allegations previously made in a report last summer by the state's attorney general.

But it offered some new details, particularly around the \$5.2 million private deal Cuomo struck to write a book, "American Crisis: Leadership Lessons on the Pandemic."

Cuomo had promised state ethics officials that no state



In this file photo, Theresa Sari, left, and her daughter Leila Ali look at a protest-memorial wall for nursing home residents who died from COVID-19, including Sari's mother Maria Sachse, March 21, 2021, in New York.

Associated Press

resources would be used on the book, but the Assembly's investigators at the law firm Davis Polk & Wardwell said they found evidence the governor had his staff spend copious amounts of time on the project.

"One senior state official explained that book-related assignments were given by superiors and expected to be completed, and the

work was not voluntary," the report said. "Another senior state official complained in a text message to a colleague that work on the book was compromising the official's ability to work on COVID-related matters."

Junior and senior staff members told investigators they were asked to perform book tasks during their work

day, including transcribing dictations, printing and delivering documents, and attending meetings with agents and publishers.

One senior state official sent and received 1,000 emails about the book, the report said. The report didn't name the official, but included details identifying her as his former top aide, Melissa DeRosa.

Responding to the report Monday, Cuomo's spokesperson, Richard Azzopardi, said senior staff who helped with the book did so on their personal time. He denied that junior staff was involved, as the report claims.

On the sexual harassment allegations, Azzopardi said the Assembly had relied too much on information gathered during a "politically biased" investigation overseen by the attorney general, Letitia James, who is now running for governor. "When all the facts are fairly weighed," Azzopardi said, none of the harassment allegations will stand up.

Cuomo, a Democrat, resigned in August to avoid a likely impeachment trial.

"The former governor's conduct — as shown in this report — is extremely disturbing and is indicative of someone who is not fit for office," Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Lavine, a Democrat, said.

Cuomo has denied sexually harassing anyone or touching any women inappropriately. For weeks, he has attacked the Assembly's investigation as biased and set on smearing him. □

Michael Cohen ends prison term after Trump-related crimes



Michael Cohen, former President Donald Trump's longtime personal lawyer, speaks outside Federal Court in New York, Monday, Nov. 22, 2021.

Associated Press

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Cohen, who was former President Donald Trump's longtime personal lawyer until his 2018 arrest, said Monday that his three-year prison sentence —

mostly spent in home confinement — was over as he took another swipe at his former boss and vowed to continue cooperating with law enforcement probes.

A smiling Cohen emerged from Manhattan federal court after signing docu-

ments and speaking with authorities about his upcoming three-year term of supervised release.

"I feel great today. It's been long overdue," Cohen said to a collection of camera crews alerted to his presence by a tweet he had sent Sunday.

Cohen was sentenced to prison in December 2018 after pleading guilty to campaign finance charges and lying to Congress, among other crimes. In all, he spent about 13 1/2 months behind prison walls and a year and a half in home confinement. His time was further reduced through good behavior.

The campaign finance charges came after he helped arrange payouts during the 2016 presidential race to keep the porn actor Stormy Daniels and model Karen McDougal

from making public claims of extramarital affairs with Trump. Trump has denied the affairs.

He implicated Trump at the time in the campaign finance charges, as he did again on Monday when he said that his release from home confinement "in no way negates the actions I took at the direction of and for the benefit of Donald J. Trump."

He said he was "cognizant of my responsibilities" and "will not cease my commitment to law enforcement." "I will continue to provide information, testimony, documents and my full cooperation on all ongoing investigations to ensure that others are held responsible for their dirty deeds and that no one is ever believed to be above the law," Cohen said.

Before his sentencing, Co-

hen tried to win leniency, saying he had cooperated fully with prosecutors, including with the probe by special counsel Robert Mueller into possible foreign influence in the 2016 election.

One of Mueller's prosecutors, Jeannie Rhee, said in court that Cohen has "provided consistent and credible information about core Russia-related issues under investigation." But Manhattan federal prosecutors said he never fully committed to cooperating with them and did not earn a substantial sentence reduction.

Cohen, who reported to prison in May 2019, was released to home confinement after about a year as authorities released low-security-risk inmates during a coronavirus outbreak in federal prisons.

Report: Democracy backsliding across the world amid pandemic

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Democracy is deteriorating across the world, with countries notably taking undemocratic and unnecessary actions to contain the coronavirus pandemic, an intergovernmental body said in its new report Monday.

"Many democratic governments are backsliding," the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, or International IDEA, said.

The 34-nation organization added that as of August 2021, 64% of countries have taken an action to curb the pandemic that it considers "disproportionate, unnecessary or illegal."

The Swedish-based body added that the situation is also getting worse in countries that are not democratic. Autocratic regimes have become "even more brazen in their repression," free speech has been restricted and the rule of law has been weakened, it said.

In its flagship report on the state of democracy, International IDEA said the number of backsliding democracies has doubled in the past decade, and mentioned in particular the United States, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia.

"This is the time for democracies to be bold, to innovate and revitalize themselves," International IDEA Secretary-General Kevin Casas-Zamora said in a



Protesters hold banners during a demonstration demanding freedom for Belarus opposition activist Raman Protasevich, in front of the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius, Lithuania, Friday, May 28, 2021.

Associated Press

statement.

The report said that "the two years since our last report have not been good for democracy," and the achievement reached when democracy became the predominant form of governance "now hangs in the balance like never before."

"Overall, the number of countries moving in an authoritarian direction in 2020 outnumbered those going in a democratic direction," the report said, adding that in the past two years, the world has lost at least four democracies, "either through flawed elections or military coups."

The 80-page report by the intergovernmental organization whose mission is to advance democracy worldwide, noted "the remarkable strength of civic activism."

It said more than 80 countries have seen protests and civic action during the pandemic despite often-harsh government restrictions. However, pro-democracy movements have met repression in Belarus; Cuba; Eswatini, previously known as Swaziland; Myanmar; and Sudan.

The report comes ahead of U.S. President Joe Biden's Dec. 9-10 virtual "summit for democracy" aimed at

gathering government, civil society and private sector leaders in what Biden has cast as a global faceoff against rising autocratic forces.

In Asia, International IDEA said, Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Myanmar have suffered from "a wave of growing authoritarianism." But democratic erosion has also been found in India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

"China's influence, coupled with its own deepening autocratization, also puts the legitimacy of the democratic model at risk," the report said.

In Africa, democracy de-

clines "have undermined remarkable progress made across the continent over the past three decades." The pandemic has added pressure on governments to respond to concerns regarding governance, rights and social inequality, it said. It also noted military coups in Chad, Guinea, Mali and Sudan.

The report also noted that half the democracies in the Americas have suffered democratic erosion, with notable declines in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador and the United States.

As for Europe, the pandemic "has placed a strain on democracy" and some countries where democratic principles were already under threat, it provided an excuse for governments to weaken democracy further. Europe's non-democratic governments — it identified Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Turkey — have intensified their already very repressive practices, International IDEA said.

"The pandemic broadened the pre-existing rift between high-performing democracies in Western Europe and weaker counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe," said Sam Van Der Staak, head of Program Regional Europe.

"That divide will continue to challenge Europe's unity, as it also faces greater outside pressure from non-democratic superpowers. □

Italy cracks gang forcing Nigerian women into prostitution

By **FRANCES D'EMILIO**
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italian customs police on Monday dismantled a Nigerian organized crime syndicate that forced dozens of young women into prostitution and begging on the streets of Italy and then smuggled out millions of euros in ill-gained revenues to Nigeria, with cash hidden in suitcase handles or pasta packages.

The police said raids in cities in northern and southern Italy as well as on the island of Sardinia yielded

40 arrests. The suspects are being held for investigation of alleged money-laundering, facilitating illegal immigration, human trafficking, putting persons into slavery and exploiting prostitution.

Dozens of others are also under investigation. Helping spark the investigation was the complaint of a Nigerian woman, brought illegally into Italy, that her fellow countrywomen were taking on debts as high as 50,000 euros (\$56,000) to arrive, only to be forced into prosti-

tution for the syndicate. While prostitution is legal in Italy, the exploitation of prostitutes is illegal.

The police in a statement said while the Nigerian crime syndicate was based in Italy, its operations extended to Germany, Libya and Nigeria.

"Forty-one young women (were) assigned to prostitution, while nine were forced to beg," the statement said.

To discourage the women from turning to authorities for help, they "were mistreated, put under control

and put into a state of psychological vulnerability" by the use of macabre voodoo rites to guarantee they would pay off their travel debts, police said. In recent decades, other Nigerian women forced into prostitution into Italy told authorities and social workers that the voodoo rituals made them feared that defying their criminal handlers would cause bad fortunes for their families. The crime syndicate used a combination of methods to pump their ill-gained revenues back into Nige-

ria, mostly in real estate there, Italian authorities said.

The criminals used 11 teams of cash couriers, who sometimes hid wads of money inside the retractable handles of luggage or inside pasta packages to elude searches at Italy's airports, the police said.

Police said measures by Italian judicial authorities helped the young victims break "the ties of physical-psychological coercion which kept them bound" to their exploiters. □

Philippines redeploys boats to shoal after Chinese blockade

By JIM GOMEZ

MANILA, Philippines (AP)

— The Philippine military defiantly redeployed two supply boats on Monday to provide food to Filipino marines guarding a disputed shoal in the South China Sea after the Chinese coast guard used water cannons to forcibly turn the boats away in an assault last week that drew angry condemnation and warnings from Manila.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the two civilian wooden-hulled boats carrying navy personnel left western Palawan province and should reach the marines stationed on a navy ship at Second Thomas Shoal after an overnight trip. Lorenzana said the boats aren't being escorted by the navy or coast guard in accordance with a request by China's ambassador to Manila, who, he said, assured him in talks over the weekend that the boats would not be blocked again.

A navy plane will nevertheless fly over the remote shoal, which has been surrounded by Chinese surveil-



Protesters wear a mask of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping during a rally outside the Chinese consulate in Manila, Philippines on May 7, 2021.

Associated Press

lance ships in a years-long territorial standoff, when the Filipino boats reach it, the defense chief said. The Philippines says the shoal is in its internationally recognized exclusive economic zone, but China insists it has sovereignty over the waters.

"The Chinese ambassador assured me they will not be impeded but they re-

quested there should be no escort," Lorenzana told reporters. Asked if he expects that the vessels won't be blocked, he replied, "We will see."

The government conveyed its "outrage, condemnation and protest of the incident" to China after two Chinese coast guard ships blocked the two Filipino boats on Tuesday and a third coast

guard ship sprayed high-pressure streams of water on the boats, which were forced to abort their mission to transport food to the marines guarding the shoal, officials said.

Philippine Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. ordered Beijing's ships to back off and warned China that Manila's supply boats are covered by a mutual de-

fense treaty with the United States. Washington later said it was standing by the Philippines "in the face of this escalation that directly threatens regional peace and stability," and reiterated "that an armed attack on Philippine public vessels in the South China Sea would invoke U.S. mutual defense commitments" under the 1951 U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian responded to the Philippine protests by saying that China's coast guard had upheld Chinese sovereignty after the Philippine ships entered Chinese waters at night without permission.

It was the latest flareup in long-simmering territorial disputes in the strategic waterway, where China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have overlapping claims. China claims virtually the entire South China Sea and has transformed seven shoals into missile-protected island bases to cement its assertions, ratcheting up tensions. □

French military denies injuring protesters in Burkina Faso



A Burkina Faso soldier walks past a French Armoured Personnel Carrier part of a French military convoy heading to Niger, stopped by protesters in Kaya, Burkina Faso, Saturday Nov. 20, 2021.

Associated Press

By SAM MEDNICK

KAYA, Burkina Faso (AP)

— The French military has denied injuring civilians in Burkina Faso when firing warning shots to disperse protesters who had blocked one of its military convoys.

Amid an increase in Islamic extremist violence in Burkina Faso, tensions have increased. Many people in Burkina Faso are angry that the former colonial power is not doing more to protect them in the West African country's five-year

fight against jihadists linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, which has left thousands dead and displaced more than 1.4 million people.

This came to a head when a French military convoy was stopped in the central city of Kaya as it headed to the neighboring country of Niger. A crowd surrounded the convoy refusing to let it move. The convoy has been able to move about 20 miles south of Kaya but remained blocked there Monday, making it five days that it has been forced to remain in the Kaya area.

Several witnesses said at least three people were injured when French soldiers tried to disperse the crowds on Saturday by firing warning shots into the ground, hitting three people in the legs.

The protesters were trying to cut through a barrier

where about a convoy of 90 trucks guarded by approximately 100 French soldiers had pulled off to the side of the main road, said witnesses. The French forces responded by firing warning shots into the air, Pascal Ianni spokesman for the chief of defense for the French armed forces told The Associated Press.

"We just confirm that there were no wounded people and that the warning shots did not cause injuries to the protesters," he said. People might have been wounded because of the movement within the protest or because of Burkina Faso's security forces, he said, which were acting as a buffer between the French soldiers and the population.

But three witnesses told AP that the army first shot in the air and then toward the ground so that people would run away.

Burkina Faso's military did not respond to requests for comment. Burkina Faso's security forces did not fire their weapons, according to one soldier who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The blockade of the French military convoy is the latest in a series of protests that began in June and increased last week after at least 53 people, including 49 gendarmes and 4 civilians, were killed in the Sahel region's Soum province, the deadliest single attack on the security forces in years. Earlier this month Burkina Faso's opposition parties gave the president a one-month ultimatum to bring the country's security under control or it would organize protests to demand his resignation. A protest is scheduled for Nov. 27. □

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U.N. peacekeepers face greater threats from complex conflicts

By EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The more than 87,000 personnel in U.N. peacekeeping missions are confronting greater threats today because conflicts have become more complex and are driven by an increasing number of factors ranging from ethnic tensions and the impact of organized crime to illegal exploitation of resources and terrorism, the U.N. peacekeeping chief said Friday.

Jean-Pierre Lacroix said in an interview with The Associated Press that even compared to two or three years ago, "most of our peacekeeping missions have a political and security environment that has deteriorated."

In addition and "equally important," he said, is that the conflicts are "multi-layered" and very often local and national, but also regional and global. He pointed to Africa's impoverished Sahel region, which is seeing increasing terrorist activity, as an example.

What is causing this change in how U.N. peacekeepers have to operate are a number of factors starting with increased political divisions among the U.N.'s 193 member nations, he said. The drivers of conflict are increasing, Lacroix said, and there are also what he called "conflict enhancers," including digital technologies, the impact of fake news and misinformation on conflicts, and "armed groups using increasingly sophisticated means to undermine our actions."

The U.N. currently has 12 far-flung peacekeeping operations — six in Africa, four in the Middle East, one in Europe and one in



This June 14, 2018, file photo shows Nigeriens and third-country migrants head towards Libya from Agadez, Niger.

Associated Press

Asia — with the more than 66,000 military personnel from 121 countries joined by over 7,000 international police and 14,000 civilians. Lacroix said peacekeepers continue to make "a huge difference" in countries where they oversee cease-fires like Cyprus and south Lebanon in terms of preventing conflict, and "they also make a huge difference in terms of protection of civilians, even though we would like to be able to do more."

But the undersecretary-general for peace operations said the drivers of conflict "are massively impacting the conflicts in which we're involved."

"They pose increasingly important threats to countries in which our missions are deployed, and frankly to the region where we are operating," he said.

"Are we equipped enough as a multilateral system to address these threats?" Lacroix asked rhetorically. "I'm not sure. I think there's prob-

ably more that should be done in those areas."

He called an upcoming ministerial meeting on U.N. peacekeeping in Seoul, South Korea on Dec. 7-8 an important opportunity to improve the performance and impact of peacekeepers and "the effectiveness of our tools," and to mobilize international support for these efforts.

Lacroix said "a significant number" of ministers and senior officials from all U.N. member states are expected in Seoul, stressing that high-level participation is "critically important" as an expression of support for U.N. peacekeeping, which is funded by a separate U.N. budget amounting to \$6.38 billion for the year ending June 30, 2022, as well as voluntary contributions.

He said the peacekeeping department has circulated a list to U.N. member nations of what it needs to improve the protection of peacekeepers against am-


bushes, improvised explosive devices and attacks, and to protect their camps. The list also includes improved medical support and equipment to make peacekeepers more nimble, mobile and reactive, especially more helicopters, he said.

Lacroix said there are two other very important areas: improving the missions' ability to collect and process information to better prevent threats instead of having to react to them, and increasing the number of women in peacekeeping operations "because we know for a fact that more women in peacekeeping means more effective peacekeeping." □

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Emerald Ambassador honored at Renaissance Ocean Suites



ORANJESTAD — Recently, Mr. Mario Arends, on behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, had the great pleasure of honoring a loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba as Emerald Ambassador at his home away from home. The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between 10-20-35 and more consecutive years.

The honoree was **Mr. Robert Hand** from New York.

Arends thanked him for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years together with the members of Renaissance Ocean

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Aruba's reforestation

Episode CXXXI-131

NOORD — In this episode we will focus on the need to reforest the island combating rising temperatures of our planet. We must work form out local communities and increase the pressure on our leaders. However reforestation is not a matter of repopulating without ecological criteria but of opting for island of endemic biodiversity as an ecological strategy.

In the 1990s, after decades of observation and years of study, Akira Miyawaki demonstrated that the recovery of the potential natural vegetation of a degraded land was achieved more quickly by planting indigenous species, as opposed to what was previously believed to be with the massive repopulation of non-native trees fast growing.

tion of non-native trees fast growing.

The Miyawaki method is an ecological restoration method that, based on the Potential Natural Vegetation of a space, aims to recreate a landscape taking as a reference the vegetation that supposedly would have existed there if there had been no human incursion.

The advantages of this method are abundant and are not only linked to the growth speed of the chosen native species but also from a recreational and social point of view, incorporating native plants allows them to be valued, made known and with their rapid growth it achieves that people love them by protecting and caring for them.



The success of implementing the Miyawaki method consists primarily in adapting it to the place according to the environmental conditions and in parallel knowing exactly the local vegetation, its variants and the way in which it is expressed. Fundamental stages to achieve amazing results. In this way, the idea is to plant native plants in available land and follow their growth with minimal intervention.

In a first step, the soil must be identified, looking for its deficiencies and nutrients that it has, defining the species that adapt to the climate and the

place. Search the region for the biomass necessary to fill the deficiencies of the land, if they exist, and do not use pesticides or added products. Follow the growth rate of the plants during the first two years through irrigation and weeding and plant them at a very high density.

We must be aware that planting more trees does not create forests because the forest is a living structure that requires its border and its layers, which are what, guarantees the ecosystem services that we expect.

The Miyawaki method is based on taking advantage of the "potential natural vegetation" principle. Where any land that is fertile and without any human intervention would develop a lush and sustainable forest in a maximum of 1000 years.

If human support and sustainable collaboration exists in this same area, the development time of the forest would be shortened to 100 years. □



Did you say that you love Aruba its origins and cultural heritage? Than this private encounter with our columnist anthropologist is just as you. Sessions created in a gorgeous setting for visitor with special interests. Appointment is required. etnianaativa03@gmail.com or Whatsapp us 297 592 2702 for a private reservation.



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Pfizer Booster shot is now available in Aruba

ORANJESTAD - Recently, the local authorities in Aruba have received the green light to start administering the Pfizer Booster shot. They will give the shot to individuals older than 60 years, including those working in healthcare in direct contact with patients.

Persons older than 60 years need to receive their booster shot to increase the protection level in persons in this age category. Compared to the younger group as compared to the younger group. The first and second Pfizer vaccines are slightly less effective in persons older than 60 years. The booster shot is similar to the first two vaccines, but it

increases the effectiveness of the first and second vaccines.

To manage the flow of people and comply with the safety protocols at the vaccination site, DVG categorizes the group older than 60 years according to age. The first group to receive their booster shot will be older than 80 years, followed by persons older than 70 years, and finally those older than 60 years.

The vaccines will arrive soon from the Netherlands, and Aruba will once more have enough vaccines to vaccinate everyone. Requirements for the booster shot:

- Only individuals older than 60 years of age or healthcare workers who work in direct contact with patients
- Booster shot is only for individuals who have received the first and second Pfizer Vaccine or the first Johnson & Johnson over 6 months ago.
- The Booster shot will only be administered with appointment and not on a walk-in basis. The Department of Public Health (DVG) DVG will use the Health App or email to send the invitation. DVG will contact those who do not have an email address by phone.



At the moment, there is no medical need to provide the booster shot to those under the age of 60 except those with a compromised immune system who can receive the booster shot with a doctor's prescription. In the future, the booster shot might become available for those under the

age of 60 years who wish to get the extra layer of protection.

The DVG continues to encourage everyone older than 12 years to get their covid vaccine at the office of the DVG. For more information, please call 280.0101 or 522.4200. □

Social Services Organizations in St. Maarten and Aruba are the First Nominees for Appeltjes van Oranje 2022

This year's theme: Equity of Opportunities for all Youths



The Heart Centered Leadership Foundation in Aruba and the K1 Britannia Foundation in St. Maarten have been revealed as the first two nominees of the Oranje Fonds's Appeltjes van Oranje award 2022. This was announced at a special pitch day held in Curaçao. Ten candidates pitched their social projects to an Oranje Fonds jury. While all candidates proved themselves worthy contenders, it was the Heart Centered Leadership Foundation and the K1 Britannia Foundation who managed to secure nominations with their inspiring and unique youth projects.

The Appeltjes van Oranje is a yearly award presented by the Oranje Fonds to three initiatives that successfully connect distinct groups or that help people to start participating in society once more. Each year, the jury selects ten nominees, including two based in the Carib-

bean parts of the Kingdom. The nominees from the European Netherlands will be announced in January.

Equity of Opportunities for all Youths

This year, the theme for the award is Equity of Opportunities for all Youths. Inequality of opportunity is an urgent problem in our society, and the COVID-19 crisis has only aggravated the issue. The Oranje Fonds wants to use this year's award to put the spotlight on projects that are successfully tackling this issue and provide them with well-deserved support and recognition.

Nominees

The Heart Centered Leadership Foundation works to empower young people in Aruba through a variety of programs. They guide youths in becoming aware of their identity and individual strengths, as well as of the ways in which they can contribute to society. Their approach is driven by the efforts of committed age peers. All the work is done with and for young people. The K1 Britannia Foundation's Scholarship Fund offers the chance of an education to young people for whom this would otherwise be out of reach. The Foundation focuses on young people who grew up in foster care and/

or who came in contact with law enforcement and the justice system.

The Awards

The Appeltjes van Oranje winners will be announced in spring 2022. They will receive a bronze statuette made by Princess Beatrix and a cash prize of 25,000 euros. As a rule, Queen Máxima hands out the awards, while every five years the awards are handed out by King Willem-Alexander. As this year's event marks the 20th presentation of the "Appeltjes," this year's winners will be handed the award by the King.

Oranje Fonds

The Oranje Fonds is committed to a society where no one stands alone and everyone can participate. To this end, we support social initiatives that work towards a more cohesive society, take care of those who temporarily need it, and contribute to equity of opportunities. Our support is provided in the form of knowledge and networks, funds, time and recognition. This, in turn, is made possible by the assistance we receive from the Nationale Postcode Loterij, the Dutch Lottery, friends and businesses. King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima are the Oranje Fonds's patrons. □

Yes, there are turkeys for Thanksgiving - for a price

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Business Writer

Turkeys may not be able to fly very far. But their prices can soar — along with the costs of other holiday staples like cranberry sauce and pie filling.

The Thanksgiving table hasn't been spared the price inflation that is rampant elsewhere in the economy because of strong consumer demand and labor shortages.

The American Farm Bureau estimates a Thanksgiving feast for 10, complete with sweet potatoes, rolls, a vegetable tray and a pie with whipped cream, will cost \$53.31 this year, up 14% from a year ago. It's an unusual spike. Before this year, the annual cost estimate had been falling since 2015.

"The inflation is real. Everybody is saying that. Everybody is feeling it," said Butterball President and CEO Jay Jandrain. "Whether it's labor, transportation, packaging materials, energy to fuel the plants — everything costs more."

North Carolina-based Butterball, which supplies around one-third of Thanksgiving turkeys, struggled to attract workers earlier this year, leading to processing delays. While turkeys waited, they grew bigger, adding to already skyrocketing costs for corn and soybean feed.

But Jandrain said labor shortages have lessened and the company was able to secure enough trucks to get its turkeys to grocery stores. So there will be about the same number of whole turkeys as last year, but fewer smaller birds.



Butterball President and CEO Jay Jandrain poses at the company's corporate headquarters in Garner, N.C., Friday, Nov. 19, 2021.

Associated Press

"The good news about that is everybody loves the after-Thanksgiving leftovers, and they are going to have more of them this year," Jandrain said.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average wholesale price of an 8- to 16-pound frozen turkey in mid-November was \$1.35 per pound, up 21% from a year ago. For other staples, weather conditions compounded labor shortages. Pumpkin crops were smaller due to heavy rains and a fungus in Illinois — a top supplier — and drought in California. In early November, fresh pumpkins were averaging \$2.72 per pound, up 5% from a year ago, according to Nielsen IQ. Prices for green beans were up 4% while canned cranberry sauce was up 2.5%.

Ryanne Bowyer of Dallas,

Texas, usually buys turkey a day or two after Thanksgiving to save money. But this year, she signed up for Ibotta, a receipt-scanner app, which gave her a turkey, potatoes, corn, soup, gravy and cornbread from Walmart — all free — just for signing up.

"If that hadn't come along, the plan was just to go to the woods with my wife and grill wieners," Bowyer joked.

Still, many retailers facing cost pressures of their own are pulling back on their usual Thanksgiving promotions. In the week before Thanksgiving, the number of U.S. stores offering specials on turkeys was at the lowest level since 2017, said Mark Jordan, the executive director of Leap Market Analytics, which follows the livestock and poultry markets. "There will still be some

discounts, but some of the extreme giveaways are going to be fewer and farther between," Jordan said.

Diana Jepsen, a retiree from West Hartford, Connecticut, said she usually pays \$1 per pound for her Thanksgiving turkey. This year, her 23-pound Butterball cost \$1.50 per pound. But she still thinks that's a good value, especially compared to the recent price increases she has seen for beef and chicken. Jepsen will celebrate Thanksgiving with 21 family members, including her 96-year-old mother. Her Cuban-American family bastes the turkey in a mojo criollo marinade. Jepsen's husband, George Jepsen, the former attorney general of Connecticut, cooks the turkey, following his mother-in-law's recipe. Other staples they serve,

including black beans and yucca, haven't increased in price, she said. Jepsen also got boxed stuffing on sale.

"We still think it's a good bargain to be able to serve that many people," she said.

Higher turkey prices could persist into 2022, Jandrain said. Feed costs remain elevated, along with labor and transportation costs. That could help the turkey business, however, which for years has faced faltering demand for parts like turkey breasts and deli meat. The industry slaughtered 159 million turkeys in the first nine months of 2021, giving the U.S. its lowest per capita supply of turkey since 1987, Jordan said. Higher prices could encourage farmers to raise and slaughter more turkeys next year.

For some shoppers, availability — not price — was the biggest concern this year. Lauren Knapp, an economist in Rochester, New York, bought two frozen turkeys on sale weeks earlier than she might have because she worried about shortages. Knapp and her partner plan to make a practice meal on Thanksgiving and a second meal for relatives in early December.

"Friends in D.C. were saying it would be a chicken Thanksgiving because they can't find turkey anywhere," said Knapp, who was relieved turkeys were available even though some items she buys, like low-sodium turkey slices for sandwiches, have been harder to come by this year. □

GM exploring electric boats, buys 25% stake in engine maker

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors is testing the water in electric boating by buying a 25% stake in a Seattle company that makes battery-powered outboard motors.

The Detroit automaker said Monday that it bought the stake in Pure Watercraft for a venture that it says will develop and commercialize battery electric watercraft.

Pure Watercraft, founded in 2011, is worth \$600 million after the GM deal, spokesman Gabe Johnson said. GM said its investment is worth \$150 million, including cash and in-kind contributions. The companies would not disclose how much money GM is putting into the deal.

Privately held Pure Watercraft makes an electric

outboard propulsion system powered by a lithium-ion battery. It's designed as a drop-in replacement for any boat with a gas outboard motor from 25 to 50 horsepower. The company also works with boat manufacturers to sell complete boats, according to its website.

The two companies will combine Pure Watercraft's

marine experience with GM's engineering, supply chain and manufacturing capabilities, the automaker said in a prepared statement.

"This joint effort with GM is expected to enable us to make significant technological advancements in range and charging, while achieving volume production," Pure Water-

craft founder and CEO Andy Rebele said. The deal gives GM an opportunity to use its electric technology in another industry beyond automotive, said Dan Nicholson, vice president of global electrification. "The combined expertise of these two enterprises should result in future zero-emissions marine product offerings," Nicholson said. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

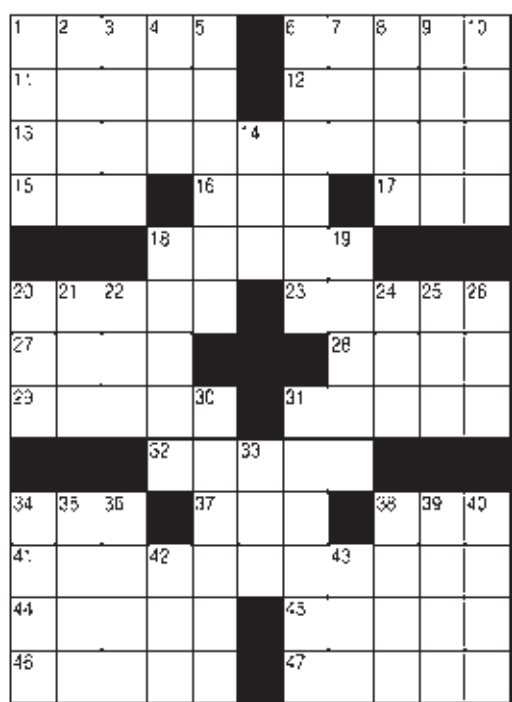
- 1 Volcano-shaped
- 6 New Jersey player
- 11 Kitchen come-on
- 12 Stood up
- 13 Red fruits
- 15 Tissue layer
- 16 Give permission to
- 17 — Moines
- 18 Star
- 20 Takes in
- 23 Titled women
- 27 Surrounded by
- 28 Ref's decision
- 29 Raucous bird
- 31 Cartoon pig
- 32 Caesar, for one
- 34 Fitting
- 37 Misbehaving
- 38 Letter before omega
- 41 Red fruits
- 44 Fable ending
- 45 Canvas holder
- 46 Vacant
- 47 Digging tool

DOWN

- 1 Complain
- 2 Spoken
- 3 Prone to pry
- 4 Little rascal
- 5 Suspension bridge parts
- 6 Moved quickly
- 7 Blunder
- 8 Nullified
- 9 "Got it"
- 10 Reduced amount
- 14 Twisty fish
- 18 Fragrant wood
- 19 Burger topper
- 20 River blocker
- 21 Thurman
- 22 Snapshot
- 24 Ruin
- 25 Antlered animal
- 26 Cunning
- 30 Unsteady
- 31 San Diego team
- 33 West of films
- 34 High point
- 35 School event
- 36 Field protector
- 38 Tuscany city
- 39 Canary snack
- 40 Cruise stop
- 42 D.C. player
- 43 Jay-Z's music



Yesterday's answer



11-23

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-23

CRYPTOQUOTE

PAT L JXS CY FDXDSJOT

DGJNAPO CKGE IFCK PAT

ADKS PADP SCTO KCP NXDOF.

— VCAK LTXXE

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HE WHO TRIMS HIMSELF TO SUIT EVERYONE WILL SOON WHITTLE HIMSELF AWAY. RAYMOND HULL

Study: Warmer summers worsen tick infestations for US moose



A moose is seen in Isle Royale, Mich., in an undated file photo. Associated Press

By JOHN FLESHER AP Environmental Writer

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP)

— It's a ghastly sight: ticks by tens of thousands burrowed into a moose's broad body, sucking its lifeblood as the agonized host rubs against trees so vigorously that much of its fur wears away.

Winter tick infestation is common with moose across the northern U.S. — usually survivable for adults but less so for calves, and miserable either way. And climate change may make it worse, scientists reported Monday.

Data collected over 19 years at Michigan's Isle Royale National Park shows moose have more ticks during winters following particularly warm summers, according to a study published in the peer-reviewed journal *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*.

That's presumably because higher temperatures quicken the development of tick eggs, boosting the number surviving to hatch, said author Sarah Hoy, a research assistant professor of animal ecology at Michigan Technological University.

"We usually think about

winter having a big impact on moose, but growing evidence suggests summer might be even more important," Hoy said.

In addition to the partial loss of their bristly winter coats, tick infestation makes moose anemic and less able to reproduce, she said. It's a leading cause of recent population declines in the Northeast, where summer temperatures have been surging more than in the Upper Midwest. The findings underscore the varied ways global warming can affect wildlife, said co-author John Vucetich, a professor of population ecology at Michigan Tech. Much research on that topic has involved predator and prey relationships, he said. Vucetich, Hoy and colleague Rolf Peterson have led the world's longest-running predator-prey study in a closed ecosystem. It features moose and wolves on Isle Royale, a Lake Superior island park. "But parasites are at least as important as predation," Vucetich said. "To be a parasite is an easy way to make a living in the natural world."

Previous studies have pre-

dicted wildlife migrating to different areas because of climate change will encounter parasites to which they haven't developed immunity. Warmer temperatures are expected to help parasites develop faster and survive longer.

The Michigan Tech team estimated year-to-year levels of tick infestation for hundreds of Isle Royale moose using photographs showing hair loss between 2001 and 2019.

The researchers developed models with those figures, plus temperature and snowfall data and other information, to draw conclusions about climate change's role.

Winter tick life cycles begin in June as each female lays several thousand eggs in soil. They hatch a few months later. Larvae crawl up forest and meadow plants and wait for hosts — preferably members of the deer family, which includes moose — to brush by so they can latch on.

Deer do better than moose at grooming themselves to get rid of the pests, perhaps because of evolutionary differences, the paper said.

The ticks feed on their hosts' blood through winter, then detach and reproduce. Males die, as do females if they fall onto snow-covered ground. If the ground is dry, females survive and lay eggs to start the next generation.

Previous studies of how climate change might affect tick-moose interaction have focused on milder winters, which give ticks more time to find hosts while boosting their prospects for successful egg laying by reducing snow cover.

"But this new paper says, 'Not so fast — these subtle changes during summers can be exacerbating some of these effects and you need to pay attention to that as well,'" said Michelle Carstensen, wildlife health program supervisor with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. □

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214822

Bezos makes gifts to Obama foundation and NYU medical center

By HALELUYA HADERO AP Business Writer

Former President Barack Obama's foundation announced Monday that it has received a \$100 million donation from Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, which it says is the largest individual contribution it has received to date.

Separately on Monday, NYU Langone Health, a medical center affiliated with New York University, said it has received a \$166 million gift from Bezos and his family.

For its part, the Obama foundation said in a statement that the gift from Bezos is intended "to help expand the scope of programming that reaches emerging leaders" in the United States and around the world. □

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Assistant Director
Xiomara Arends

Editors
Liza Koolman (Management assistant)
Richard Brooks

Sales
Linda Reijnders
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds
classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection
accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website
Juan Luis Pinto
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Weststraat 22
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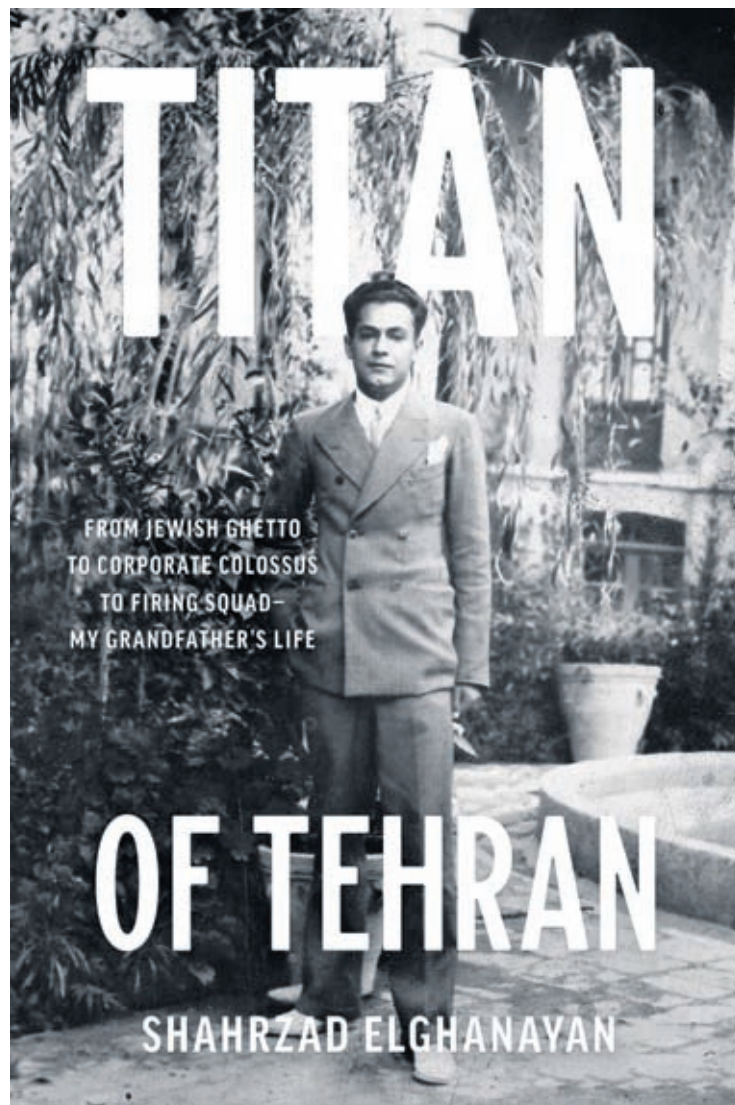
By **ROB MERRILL**
Associated Press

When most of us get curious about our family history, we pay a visit to Ancestry.com. Shahrzad Elghanayan is not most of us.

She is the granddaughter of Habib Elghanian, arguably one of the most famous Iranian industrialists of all time, whose rise and fall mirrored that of his homeland. She's also an award-winning photo journalist, trained to recognize a good story when she sees one.

For readers not familiar with Iranian history, this story is broadly summarized on the book's cover: "Titan of Tehran: From Jewish Ghetto to Corporate Colossus to Firing Squad — My Grandfather's Life." Elghanayan opens in a narrative style, recounting how her father set up a shortwave radio in the family's New York bathroom so he could hear the news from Iran in the spring of 1979. On May 8, 1979, he learns of his father's execution: "While our black shortwave droned on in the cold marble bathroom, my grandfather's bullet-riddled body languished in the prison morgue, with a cardboard sign around his neck. It read: 'Habib Elghanian: Zionist Spy.'"

After that dramatic opening, Elghanayan — who spells her last name slightly differently from the way



This image shows the book cover for "Titan of Tehran: From Jewish Ghetto to Corporate Colossus to Firing Squad - My Grandfather's Life" by Shahrzad Elghanayan.

Associated Press

her grandfather's name has been transliterated — settles in and recounts her grandfather's story more like an objective reporter than a beloved family member.

She peppers her text with

footnotes and obviously did her research. For readers coming to the story cold, it can be hard to follow. So many foreign names and relationships to track. But those specifics won't matter except to historians who

now have a new firsthand source to consult.

The most readable parts of the book are in the first person as Elghanayan remembers her childhood in Tehran. (Her father moved the family to New York in 1977 about two years before Ayatollah Khomeini and his Islamic revolutionaries toppled the Shah.) Here she is remembering the large family home her father left behind: "In a large cage, we kept dozens of pigeons, and I worried about the one with brown and white feathers who stood apart from the gray ones. Being different, I thought, put him in some sort of danger."

But Elghanayan avoids inserting herself too much into the narrative, choosing to focus on her grandfather's story. And what a story. He was Iran's version of a Rockefeller or Carnegie — a self-made millionaire who saw business opportunities everywhere after World War II as Iran moved quickly to modernize its economy. He and his six brothers build an empire that among other things introduces plastic to Iran. The boom years last for decades. In 1973-1974, the country's gross national product rises 30%, and it's easy to see why Habib Elghanian loved his country so much.

But it's that love of country that blinds him to the dan-

gers he faced in Iran as a prominent Jewish businessman during the ayatollah's rise to power. Elghanayan struggles to understand why her grandfather didn't leave Iran when he could, before the Revolutionary Guard began tracking and killing prominent Jews. Was it national pride? Stubbornness? "I haven't done anything wrong," Habib tells four of his family members during a visit to New York about six months before his execution. "I built buildings, I built factories... I haven't done anything bad to Iran that anyone would want to get me for anything."

The hindsight of history, of course, makes his actions seem tragic in the extreme, but writing this book has obviously brought his granddaughter a sense of peace. "As I have delved into our former homeland's record of injustices, to us and so many others, I've stopped yearning for this faraway land where I'd never have the opportunity to flourish because of my religion or my gender. That kind of yearning is nothing more than toxic romanticism."

In sharing her grandfather's remarkable story with the world, Elghanayan manages to avoid such romanticism, telling a very personal story that also contributes to the historical record. □

Two Fox contributors quit, citing 'irresponsible' voices



Images of Fox News personalities, from left, Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, Maria Bartiromo, Stuart Varney, Neil Cavuto and Charles Payne appear outside News Corporation headquarters in New York on July 31, 2021.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Two writers who have been paid contributors to Fox News Channel have resigned,

citing Tucker Carlson's "Patriot Purge" documentary on last January's U.S. Capitol insurrection as a last straw for them.

Jonah Goldberg and Stephen Hayes, who put out a Substack newsletter on conservative news called The Dispatch, had both worked for Fox since 2009.

"The voices of the responsible are being drowned out by the irresponsible," they wrote on their site. They did not immediately return messages from the Associated Press on Monday.

Fox had no comment on their criticisms. Carlson told The New York Times that

their departure was great news. "Our viewers will be grateful," he said.

"Patriot Purge" is a three-part documentary released last month on the Fox Nation streaming service. In it, Carlson argues that Jan. 6 is being used as a pretext for persecution of conservative Americans, and compared it to how falsehoods were used in the lead-up to the Iraq War.

Goldberg and Hayes called the documentary a collection of incoherent conspiracy-mongering, which is "riddled with factual inaccuracies, half-truths, deceptive imagery

and damning omissions." They said it was the most egregious example of a long-term trend of opinion hosts amplifying the false claims and bizarre narratives of former President Donald Trump, while Fox's news side reports the truth. "If a person with such a platform shares such misinformation loud enough and long enough, there are Americans who will believe — and act upon — it," they wrote. "This isn't theoretical. This is what actually happened on January 6, 2021." The two writers haven't been on most of Fox's opinion shows lately. □

Correa, Freeman, Scherzer among baseball's top free agents

By **NOAH TRISTER**
AP Baseball Writer

With a possible lockout on the horizon, it's been mostly business as usual on the free agent market — so far. Detroit signed left-hander Eduardo Rodríguez. Houston retained star righty Justin Verlander. Noah Syndergaard went from the Mets to the Angels on an expensive one-year deal.

The deadline to accept qualifying offers came and went last week, further clarifying who was heading to the open market.

It remains to be seen whether the uncertainty about the next labor agreement will affect offseason moves for the top players available, but it's clear there are plenty of good options for teams looking to upgrade. Here's a look at baseball's top free agents by position. Players' current ages are in parentheses:

LEFT-HANDED STARTER

Carlos Rodón, White Sox (28)

It's a toss-up between Rodón and Robbie Ray. Rodón didn't really threaten Ray in the Cy Young vote, but his ERA was about a half a run lower and he's also younger. And Ray received a qualifying offer while Rodón did not, so that may make Rodón a more enticing target.

Other options: Ray rebounded impressively from a poor 2020, but he isn't some one-year wonder. He was very good in 2017 as well. Clayton Kershaw has never pitched for anyone but the Dodgers, but he's available now and at age 33 can still be effective if healthy.

LEFT-HANDED RELIEVER

Aaron Loup, Mets (33)

Loup went 6-0 with a 0.95 ERA in 65 appearances. Opponents hit .192 off him. Other options: Andrew Chafin was impressive last season for both the Cubs and Athletics. Tony Watson cut down on the walks after being traded from the Angels to the Giants.

RIGHT-HANDED STARTER

Max Scherzer, Dodgers (37)
No signs yet of any major decline for Scherzer despite his age. He's had an



Kelsea Ballerini, left, and Freddie Freeman present the award for male vocalist of the year at the 55th annual CMA Awards on Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021, at the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

ERA at 3.15 or lower in eight of the last nine seasons — the only time it was higher was in the shortened 2020 campaign.

Other options: Kevin Gausman was good in 2020 and looked like a Cy Young contender this year until a second-half stumble. Marcus Stroman gave the Mets a 3.02 ERA over 33 starts in 2021.

RIGHT-HANDED RELIEVER

Raisel Iglesias, Angels (31)
Iglesias saved 34 games for Los Angeles, and things did not go smoothly for the Cincinnati bullpen after he left. He's had at least 30 saves in each of the past three non-shortened seasons.

Other options: Kenley Jansen seemed to be slipping after three straight years with an ERA over 3.00. Then he lowered it to 2.22 this year and held opponents to a .153 average. Tampa Bay signed Collin McHugh before last season, and that alone is a good endorsement of a reliever's potential. He went 6-1 with a 1.55 ERA.

CATCHER

Yan Gomes, Athletics (34)

There aren't any star catchers available this year, but Gomes can provide a bit of pop. Other options: Roberto Pérez hit 24 homers in 2019 and then batted under .200 in 2020 and 2021. Robinson Chirinos hit double-digit homers three straight seasons from 2017-19 but has played only 71 games since.

FIRST BASE

Freddie Freeman, Braves (32)

Losing Freeman would be a major downer for the World Series champions, but the five-time All-Star and 2020 MVP will obviously command a big price. Even at first base it's hard to find this kind of consistent production.

Other options: Anthony Rizzo's OPS has been under .800 the past two seasons, but he's the only other big name available at first. Brad Miller is coming off a 20-homer season in Philadelphia but is unlikely to provide a high batting average.

SECOND BASE

Marcus Semien, Blue Jays (31)

Let's list Semien as a second baseman — where he mostly played this season — and avoid a tough decision at shortstop. Semien hit 45 home runs this year while playing all 162 games, and he finished third in the MVP vote. He has the most WAR of any player in baseball since the start of the 2019 season, according to Baseball-Reference.com.

Other options: César Hernández hit 18 home runs for Cleveland this season before being traded to the White Sox. Donovan Solano's offensive numbers dipped slightly this year but he was a solid contributor for the 107-win Giants.

THIRD BASE

Eduardo Escobar, Brewers (32)

Escobar hit 28 home runs this year in the first full season since he slugged 35 in 2019. He played a bit at first, second and shortstop in addition to third.

Other options: Kyle Seager got a big ovation from Seattle fans at the last game of this season — they were apparently well aware that he might be moving on to

another team. Jonathan Villar's stolen base numbers aren't what they used to be, but he can still provide double-digit homers.

SHORTSTOP

Carlos Correa, Astros (27)

Correa made his big league debut at age 20 and reaches free agency well shy of his 30th birthday. That makes him a good bit younger than some of the other top players on this list, and he may be the most sought-after name this off-season.

Other options: There are plenty of good shortstops available this year. Corey Seager is also 27, and Trevor Story just turned 29. Javier Báez turns 29 on Dec. 1.

OUTFIELD

Starling Marte, Athletics (33)

Kris Bryant, Giants (29)

Nick Castellanos, Reds (29)
Marte did what he could to help the A's down the stretch, and he ended up with an .841 OPS this year for Oakland and Miami. Bryant doesn't turn 30 until January and can obviously play third base in addition to the outfield. Castellanos set career highs in homers (34), batting average (.309) and OPS (.939) this year.

Other options: Avisail García hit a career-high 29 homers for Milwaukee and is only 30 years old. Chris Taylor remained productive for the Dodgers while playing six positions. Japanese slugger Seiya Suzuki hit 38 homers this season with the Hiroshima Toyo Carp.

DESIGNATED HITTER

Nelson Cruz, Rays (41)

Cruz may finally be slowing down, but only a little. He hit 32 homers this year but posted an .832 OPS, his lowest since 2012.

Other options: Kyle Schwarber finally ended up with an American League team when he was traded from Washington to Boston. He can play the outfield, but he's known for his bat, and his role will likely depend on where he goes and what the rules are. Mitch Moreland spent a lot more time at DH than at first base this year, and his offensive numbers dipped significantly. □

Analysis: Some teams just needed more time to bloom

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs are back in a familiar spot. Same for Bill Belichick and the New England Patriots.

The Chiefs and Patriots have surged to first place in their respective divisions with monthlong winning streaks. The Colts, 49ers and Eagles have also turned things around in November.

In the NFL's longest season, counting teams out before Halloween was premature. The Chiefs beat Dallas 19-9 on Sunday for their fourth straight victory since a 27-3 loss to Tennessee on Oct. 24. They now lead the jumbled AFC West by a half-game over the Chargers (6-4) and should be favorites to win their sixth straight division title.

Mahomes had a career-low passer rating against the Titans and some people were questioning if the 26-year-old had already played his best football in his first four seasons when he won an NFL MVP award and a Super Bowl MVP trophy in consecutive years. Since then, Mahomes has seven touchdown passes and only two interceptions during Kansas City's four-



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes heads off the field following a 19-9 victory over the Dallas Cowboys in an NFL football game Sunday, Nov. 21, 2021, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

game winning streak that has been fueled by a suddenly stingy defense that has allowed just 11.8 points per game in that span. The unit allowed just three field goals to Dak Prescott and the league's top-ranked offense.

"Since the second half of the Tennessee game, those guys have been playing better," Mahomes said of the defense. "It got lost because the offense wasn't playing very well. We were winning games because of

our defense and people were so used to our offense going out and putting up these numbers. But every weekend I was right here at the podium saying don't lose track of how good our defense is playing. To go up against an offense like the (Cowboys) that has put up so many yards and scores, and shut it down, that's impressive."

If Kansas City's improved defense continues to play well, Mahomes and the Chiefs could be playing in

the Super Bowl for the third year in a row.

One of the top teams standing in their way will be the Patriots, a scenario nobody could've envisioned when New England opened the season 2-4. Back then, it seemed the Patriots' wild, spending frenzy in free agency was wasted money. But New England kicked off Week 11 with a 25-0 win at Atlanta on Thursday night. The Pats (7-4) have won five in a row behind a strong de-

fense and solid play from rookie quarterback Mac Jones. After a rare losing season, they're back leading the AFC East, a division New England owned for two decades before Tom Brady left for Tampa Bay. The Colts started 0-3 with new quarterback Carson Wentz coming over from Philadelphia after a dismal season with the Eagles that looked like it would carry over to his new home. But Wentz has been steady — 18 touchdowns, 3 picks — and Indianapolis has won six of the last eight games. Jonathan Taylor was spectacular in a dominant 41-15 win at Buffalo on Sunday, scoring five TDs. At 6-5, Indianapolis is back in the playoff race.

The 49ers were 2-4 after losing four in a row and many were wondering when coach Kyle Shanahan would bench Jimmy Garoppolo for rookie Trey Lance. But Shanahan stuck with Garoppolo after the worst game of his career in a 30-18 loss to the Colts and the veteran has responded with a string of strong performances. Garoppolo has posted a passer rating over 100 in four straight games, leading San Francisco to three wins. □

Ortiz, Howard, Lincecum, A-Rod new to Hall of Fame ballot



Los Angeles Angels starting pitcher Tim Lincecum throws to the Baltimore Orioles during a baseball game in Baltimore, Sunday, July 10, 2016.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — David Ortiz, Ryan Howard, Tim Lincecum and Alex Rodriguez are among 13 first-time candidates on the

Hall of Fame ballot of the Baseball Writers' Association of America, joining 17 holdovers. Steroids-tainted stars Barry

Bonds and Roger Clemens make their 10th and final appearance on the BBWAA ballot along with Curt Schilling, who fell 16 votes shy of the necessary 75% in last year's balloting. Schilling appeared on 71.1% of ballots, Bonds 61.8% and Clemens 61.6%. Justin Morneau, Jimmy Rollins and Jake Peavy also are new to the ballot along with Carl Crawford, Prince Fielder, Joe Nathan, Jonathan Papelbon, A.J. Pierzynski and Mark Teixeira, the Hall and BBWAA said Monday.

Holdovers include Bobby Abreu, Mark Buehrle, Todd Helton, Tim Hudson, Torii Hunter, Andruw Jones, Jeff Kent, Andy Pettitte, Manny Ramirez, Gary Shef-

field, Sammy Sosa, Omar Vizquel and Billy Wagner. Sosa also will be on the ballot for the final time after receiving 17% last year. BBWAA members with 10 or more consecutive years of membership are eligible to vote. Ballots must be postmarked by Dec. 31 and results will be announced Jan. 25.

Any players elected will be inducted into the Hall at Cooperstown on July 24 along with anyone elected by the Golden Days Era and Early Baseball Era committees, which are scheduled to meet on Dec. 5.

No was elected by the BBWAA in last year's vote, and Schilling asked after the vote that the Hall re-

move him from the ballot. "It's all right, the game doesn't owe me anything," he said during a live video stream on his Twitter account. Clemens has denied using performance-enhancing drugs and Bonds has denied knowingly using them. Bonds also has been accused of domestic violence and Clemens of maintaining a decadelong relationship with a singer who was 15 when they met.

Rodriguez was suspended for the 2014 season for violating MLB's drug policy and collective bargaining agreement, and Ortiz's name was alleged to have appeared on a list of players who tested positive during 2003 survey testing. □